

**REMARKS**

In the Restriction Requirement dated March 29, 2007, the Examiner indicated that the application is allegedly directed to different inventions, and has required Applicant to elect one of the following groups:

Group I: claims 1-16, drawn to a method for processing a thin film sample comprising crystallizing a thin film using laser irradiation, providing regions with specific grain characteristics.

Group II: claims 17-32, drawn to a system for processing a thin film sample comprising crystallizing a thin film using laser irradiation, providing regions with specific grain characteristics.

Group III: claim 33, drawn to a thin film sample having regions irradiated by laser and crystallized, with specific grain characteristics.

The Examiner alleges that the inventions listed as Groups I, II, and III do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, they lack the same or corresponding special technical features. The Examiner further alleges that the special technical feature shared by the three groups is crystallization of a thin film using laser irradiation, providing regions with specific grain characteristics, and that this element cannot be a special technical feature under PCT Rule 13.2 because it is shown in the prior art, specifically in U.S. Patent App. Pub. 2003/0003242 to Voutsas (hereinafter "Voutsas"), paras. 2-4.

Applicant has amended independent claims 1, 17, and 33 to eliminate typographical errors, and respectfully submits that the requirement is improper. Amended Groups I, II, and III all contain the special technical feature of crystallization of a thin film using laser irradiation, providing crystallized regions composed of a first and a second area, wherein the first area contains a first set of grains, and the second area contains a second set of grains,

and wherein at least one characteristic of the second set of grains is different from at least one characteristic of the first set of grains.

Paragraphs 2-4 of Voutsas, cited by the Examiner, discloses the use of laser annealing to form “polycrystalline silicon films having large and uniform grains,” and the fact that laser annealing allows precise control of the locations of boundaries between these large and uniform grains. (*See Voutsas, paras. 2-4*). Nowhere does Voutsas disclose providing crystallized regions composed of a first area and a second area, wherein the first area contains a first set of grains, and the second area contains a second set of grains, and wherein at least one characteristic of the second set of grains is different from at least one characteristic of the first set of grains.

Groups I, II, and III therefore relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, they have the same aforementioned special technical feature. Applicant therefore respectfully submits that the restriction requirement should be withdrawn.

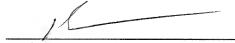
In order to completely reply to the requirement, Applicant hereby elects, with traverse, to prosecute Group I, claims 1-16, drawn to a method for processing a thin film sample comprising crystallizing a thin film using laser irradiation, providing regions with specific grain characteristics. This election is made without prejudice to the prosecution of non-elected groups in other patent applications.

### **CONCLUSION**

Applicant does not believe that any additional fee is required in connection with the submission of this document. However, should any fee be required, or if any overpayment

has been made, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees, or credit any overpayments made, to Deposit Account 02-4377.

Respectfully submitted,



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